

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please substitute the following claims for the pending claims with the same number:

1        1. (Amended) A method for protecting digital ~~images~~ image files distributed  
2        over a network, comprising ~~the steps of:~~  
3                receiving a request from a client computer running a network  
4        browser, for an original layout page containing references to digital ~~images~~ image  
5        files therein;  
6                parsing the original layout page for the references to digital  
7        ~~images~~ image files;  
8                generating a modified layout page from the original layout page  
9        by replacing at least one of the references to digital ~~images~~ image files in the  
10       original layout page with references to substitute data files, prior to responding to  
11       the client computer request; and  
12               sending the modified layout page to the client computer in  
13       response to the client computer request.

1        2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the layout page is a hyper-text  
2        markup language (HTML) page.

1        3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the layout page is an extended  
2        markup language (XML) page.

1        4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the layout page is an active  
2        server page (ASP).

1        5. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising ~~the step of~~  
2        determining characteristics of the network browser used by the client computer to  
3        issue the request.

1        6. (Amended) The method of claim 5 wherein the types of substitute data files  
2        referenced in the modified layout page ~~depends~~ depend on the characteristics of  
3        the network browser used by the client computer.

1 7. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said parsing ~~step~~ comprises ~~the~~  
2 ~~steps of~~:

3 locating tags within the layout page indicating references to  
4 digital ~~images~~ image files; and

5 identifying protection status of the digital ~~images~~ image files,  
6 based on information in a protection status database.

1 8. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said parsing ~~step~~ comprises ~~the~~  
2 ~~steps of~~:

3 locating tags within the layout page delimiting protected parts of  
4 the layout page;

5 extracting references to digital ~~images~~ image files within the  
6 protected parts of the layout page; and

7 identifying protection status of the digital ~~images~~ image files,  
8 based on information in a protection status database.

1 9. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the substitute data files ~~is~~ are  
2 pre-defined data files.

1 10. (Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the pre-defined data files ~~is~~ are  
2 pre-defined text data files.

1 11. (Amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the pre-defined data files ~~is~~ are  
2 pre-defined digital image data files.

1 12. (Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising ~~the step of~~ deriving  
2 the substitute data files from the digital ~~images~~ image files.

1 13. (Amended) The method of claim 12 wherein the substitute data files ~~is~~  
2 include watermarked data images derived from the digital ~~images~~ image files.

1 14. (Amended) The method of claim 12 wherein the substitute data files ~~is~~  
2 include encrypted data derived from the digital ~~images~~ image files using an  
3 encryption algorithm.

1 15. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein at least one of the references to  
2 digital ~~images~~ image files is a reference to an alias for a protected digital image  
3 file name.

1 16. (Amended) The method of claim 15 further comprising ~~the step of~~ looking  
2 up a file name for the protected digital image file, corresponding to the alias for  
3 the protected digital image file name.

1 17. (Amended) The method of claim 15 wherein the protected digital image file  
2 resides on a remote computer.

1 18. (Amended) The method of claim 17 further comprising ~~the step of~~ looking  
2 up an address for the remote computer and a file name for the protected digital  
3 image file, corresponding to the alias for the protected digital image file name.

1 19. (Amended) The method of claim 18 further comprising ~~the steps of~~:  
2 requesting a protected digital image data file from the remote  
3 computer, using the address for the remote computer and the file name for the  
4 protected digital image file; and  
5 receiving a protected digital image data file from the remote  
6 computer.

1 20. (Amended) The method of claim 19 further comprising ~~the step of~~ deriving  
2 the substitute data file from the protected digital image ~~data~~ file.

1 21. (Amended) The method of claim 20 wherein the substitute data file is  
2 includes a watermarked ~~data~~ image derived from the protected digital image ~~data~~  
3 file.

1 22. (Amended) The method of claim 20 wherein the substitute data file is  
2 includes encrypted data derived from the protected digital image ~~data~~ file using an  
3 encryption algorithm.

1 23. (Amended) A system for protecting digital ~~images~~ image files distributed  
2 over a network, comprising:  
3 a receiver receiving a request from a client computer running a  
4 network browser, for an original layout page containing references to digital  
5 ~~images~~ image files therein;  
6 a layout page parser parsing the original layout page for the  
7 references to digital ~~images~~ image files;  
8 a layout page generator generating a modified layout page from  
9 the original layout page by replacing at least one of the references to digital  
10 ~~images~~ image files in the original layout page with references to substitute data  
11 files, prior to responding to the client computer request; and  
12 a transmitter sending the modified layout page to the client  
13 computer in response to the client computer request.

1 24. (Original) The system of claim 23 wherein the layout page is a hyper-text  
2 markup language (HTML) page.

1 25. (Original) The system of claim 23 wherein the layout page is an extended  
2 markup language (XML) page.

1 26. (Original) The system of claim 23 wherein the layout page is an active  
2 server page (ASP).

1 27. (Original) The system of claim 23 further comprising a browser detector  
2 determining characteristics of the network browser used by the client computer to  
3 issue the request.

1 28. (Amended) The system of claim 27 wherein the substitute data files  
2 referenced in the modified layout page ~~depends~~ depend on the characteristics of  
3 the network browser used by the client computer.

1 29. (Amended) The system of claim 23 wherein said layout page parser  
2 comprises:  
3 a tag locator locating tags within the layout page indicating  
4 references to digital ~~images~~ image files; and

5 a protection status detector identifying protection status of the  
6 digital ~~images~~ image files, based on information in a protection status database.

1 30. (Amended) The system of claim 23 wherein said layout page parser  
2 comprises:

3 a tag locator locating tags within the layout page delimiting  
4 protected parts of the layout page;

5 a digital image detector extracting references to digital ~~images~~  
6 image files within the protected parts of the layout page; and

7 a protection status detector identifying protection status of the  
8 digital ~~images~~ image files, based on information in a protection status database.

1 31. (Amended) The system of claim 23 wherein the substitute data files ~~is~~ are  
2 pre-defined data files.

1 32. (Amended) The system of claim 31 wherein the pre-defined data files ~~is~~ are  
2 pre-defined text data files.

1 33. (Amended) The system of claim 31 wherein the pre-defined data files ~~is~~ are  
2 pre-defined image data files.

1 34. (Amended) The system of claim 33 further comprising a data processor  
2 deriving substitute data files from the digital ~~images~~ image files.

1 35. (Amended) The system of claim 34 wherein the substitute data files ~~is~~  
2 include watermarked ~~data~~ images derived from the digital ~~images~~ image files.

1 36. (Amended) The system of claim 34 wherein the substitute data files ~~is~~  
2 include encrypted data derived from the digital ~~images~~ image files using an  
3 encryption algorithm.

1 37. (Amended) The system of claim 23 wherein at least one of the references to  
2 digital ~~images~~ image files is a reference to an alias for a protected digital image  
3 file name.

1 38. (Amended) The system of claim 37 further comprising a file name index  
2 containing a file name for the protected digital image file corresponding to the  
3 alias for the protected digital image file name.

1 39. (Amended) The system of claim 37 wherein the protected digital image file  
2 resides on a remote computer.

1 40. (Amended) The system of claim 39 further comprising an address and file  
2 name index containing an address for the remote computer and a file name for the  
3 protected digital image file, corresponding to the alias for the protected digital  
4 image file name.

1 41. (Amended) The system of claim 40 wherein said transmitter requests the  
2 protected digital image data file from the remote computer, using the address for  
3 the remote computer and the file name for the protected digital image file, and  
4 wherein said receiver receives the protected digital image data file from the  
5 remote computer.

1 42. (Amended) The system of claim 41 further comprising a data processor  
2 deriving a substitute data file from the protected digital image data file.

1 43. (Amended) The system of claim 42 wherein the substitute data file is  
2 includes a watermarked data image derived from the protected digital image data  
3 file.

1 44. (Amended) The system of claim 42 wherein the substitute data file is  
2 includes encrypted data derived from the protected digital image data file using an  
3 encryption algorithm.

1 45. (Amended) A method for protecting digital ~~images~~ image files distributed  
2 over a network, comprising ~~the steps of~~:  
3 receiving a request from a client computer;  
4 submitting the request to a server computer;  
5 receiving an original layout page containing references to digital  
6 ~~images~~ image files therein from the server computer;

7 parsing the original layout page for the references to digital  
8 ~~images~~ image files;  
9 generating a modified layout page from the original layout page  
10 by replacing at least one of the references to digital ~~images~~ image files in the  
11 original layout page with references to substitute data files, prior to responding to  
12 the client computer request; and  
13 sending the modified layout page to the client computer in  
14 response to the client computer request.

1 46. (Amended) The method of claim 45 further comprising ~~the steps of~~:  
2 appending an identifier to the request;  
3 authenticating the request based on the identifier; and  
4 removing the identifier from the request.

1 47. (Amended) The method of claim 46 further comprising ~~the step of~~ randomly  
2 generating the identifier.

1 48. (Amended) The method of claim 45 further comprising ~~the step of~~  
2 dynamically generating the original layout page.

1 49. (Original) The method of claim 45 wherein the layout page is a hyper-text  
2 markup language (HTML) page.

1 50. (Original) The method of claim 45 wherein the layout page is an extended  
2 markup language (XML) page.

1 51. (Original) The method of claim 45 wherein the layout page is an active  
2 server page (ASP).

1 52. (Amended) The method of claim 45 wherein said parsing step comprises ~~the~~  
2 ~~steps of~~:  
3 locating tags within the layout page indicating references to  
4 digital ~~images~~ image files; and  
5 identifying protection status of the digital ~~images~~ image files,  
6 based on information in a protection status database.

1 53. (Amended) The method of claim 45 wherein said parsing ~~step~~ comprises the  
2 ~~steps of~~:

3 locating tags within the layout page delimiting protected parts of  
4 the layout page;

5 extracting references to digital ~~images~~ image files within the  
6 protected parts of the layout page; and

7 identifying protection status of the digital ~~images~~ image files,  
8 based on information in a protection status database.

1 54. (Amended) The method of claim 45 wherein the substitute data files is are  
2 pre-defined image ~~data~~ files.

1 55. (Amended) The method of claim 45 further comprising ~~the step of~~ deriving  
2 the substitute data files from the digital ~~images~~ image files.

1 56. (Amended) The method of claim 55 wherein the substitute data files is  
2 include watermarked ~~data~~ images derived from the digital ~~images~~ image files.

1 57. (Amended) The method of claim 55 wherein the substitute data files is  
2 include encrypted data derived from the digital ~~images~~ image files using an  
3 encryption algorithm.

1 58. (Amended) The method of claim 45 wherein at least one of the references to  
2 digital ~~images~~ image files is a reference to an alias for a protected digital image  
3 file name.

1 59. (Amended) The method of claim 58 further comprising ~~the step of~~ looking  
2 up a file name for the protected digital image file, corresponding to the alias for  
3 the protected digital image file name.

1 60. (Amended) The method of claim 58 wherein the protected digital image file  
2 resides on a remote computer.



1 61. (Amended) The method of claim 60 further comprising ~~the step of~~ looking  
2 up an address for the remote computer and a file name for the protected digital  
3 image file, corresponding to the alias for the protected digital image file name.

1 62. (Amended) The method of claim 61 further comprising ~~the steps of~~:  
2 requesting protected a digital image data file from the remote  
3 computer, using the address for the remote computer and the file name for the  
4 protected digital image file; and  
5 receiving the protected digital image data file from the remote  
6 computer.

1 63. (Amended) The method of claim 62 further comprising ~~the step of~~ deriving  
2 the substitute data file from the protected digital image data file.

1 64. (Amended) The method of claim 63 wherein the substitute data file is  
2 includes a watermarked data image derived from the protected digital image data  
3 file.

1 65. (Amended) The method of claim 63 wherein the substitute data file is  
2 includes encrypted data derived from the protected digital image data file using an  
3 encryption algorithm.

1 66. (Amended) A system for protecting digital ~~images~~ image files distributed  
2 over a network, comprising:

3 a receiver receiving a request from a client computer and  
4 receiving an original layout page containing references to digital ~~images~~ image  
5 files therein from a server computer;

6 a transmitter submitting the request to the server computer, and  
7 sending a modified layout page to the client computer in response to the client  
8 computer request;

9 a layout page parser parsing the original layout page for the  
10 references to digital ~~images~~ image files; and

11 a layout page generator generating the modified layout page from  
12 the original layout page by replacing at least one of the references to digital

13 ~~images~~ image files in the original layout page with references to substitute data  
14 files, prior to responding to the client computer request.

1 67. (Original) The system of claim 66 further comprising:  
2 a request modifier appending an identifier to the request and  
3 removing the identifier from the request; and  
4 a request authenticator authenticating the request based on the  
5 identifier.

1 68. (Original) The system of claim 67 further comprising an identifier generator  
2 randomly generating the identifier.

1 69. (Original) The system of claim 66 further comprising an interpreter  
2 dynamically generating the original layout page.

1 70. (Original) The system of claim 66 wherein the layout page is a hyper-text  
2 markup language (HTML) page.

1 71. (Original) The system of claim 66 wherein the layout page is an extended  
2 markup language (XML) page.

1 72. (Original) The system of claim 66 wherein the layout page is an active  
2 server page (ASP).

1 73. (Amended) The system of claim 66 wherein said layout page parser  
2 comprises:  
3 a tag locator locating tags within the layout page indicating  
4 references to digital ~~images~~ image files; and  
5 a protection status detector identifying protection status of the  
6 digital ~~images~~ image files, based on information in a protection status database.

1 74. (Amended) The system of claim 66 wherein said layout page parser  
2 comprises:  
3 a tag locator locating tags within the layout page delimiting  
4 protected parts of the layout page;

5 a digital image detector extracting references to digital ~~images~~  
6 image files within the protected parts of the layout page; and  
7 a protection status detector identifying protection status of the  
8 digital ~~images~~ image files, based on information in a protection status database.

1 75. (Amended) The system of claim 66 wherein the substitute data files is are  
2 pre-defined image ~~data~~ files.

1 76. (Amended) The system of claim 66 further comprising a data processor  
2 deriving substitute data files from the digital ~~images~~ image files.

1 77. (Amended) The system of claim 76 wherein the substitute data files is  
2 include watermarked data images derived from the digital ~~images~~ image files.

1 78. (Amended) The system of claim 76 wherein the substitute data files is  
2 include encrypted data derived from the digital ~~images~~ image files using an  
3 encryption algorithm.

1 79. (Amended) The system of claim 66 wherein at least one of the references to  
2 digital ~~images~~ image files is a reference to an alias for a protected digital image  
3 file name.

1 80. (Amended) The system of claim 79 further comprising a file name index  
2 containing a file name for the protected digital image file corresponding to the  
3 alias for the protected digital image file name.

1 81. (Amended) The system of claim 79 wherein the protected digital image file  
2 resides on a remote computer.

1 82. (Amended) The system of claim 81 further comprising an address and file  
2 name index containing an address for the remote computer and a file name for the  
3 protected digital image file, corresponding to the alias for the protected digital  
4 image file name.

1 83. (Amended) The system of claim 82 wherein said transmitter requests the  
2 protected digital image ~~data~~ file from the remote computer, using the address for  
3 the remote computer and the file name for the protected digital image file, and  
4 wherein said receiver receives the protected digital image ~~data~~ file from the  
5 remote computer.

1 84. (Amended) The system of claim 83 further comprising a data processor  
2 deriving the substitute data file from the protected digital image ~~data~~ file.

1 85. (Amended) The system of claim 84 wherein the substitute data file is  
2 includes a watermarked ~~data~~ image derived from the protected digital image ~~data~~  
3 file.

1 86. (Amended) The system of claim 84 wherein the substitute data file is  
2 includes encrypted data derived from the protected digital image ~~data~~ file using an  
3 encryption algorithm.